

The Advocate

N. R. P. A.

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S. M. SCOTT spoke to a good house at Lincoln Center, February 2. The storm in the morning prevented as good an attendance as might otherwise have been expected, and the people desire that he shall come again, when they promise to do better.

In the report of the vote for United States Senator in the issue of February 4, Messrs. Mitchell of Reno, Morris of Clark and Morrison of Labette are reported as having voted for Ingalls. This is an error on its face. The official figures show that every People's party Representative in the Legislature voted for Peffer. The error is a typographical one, and we are glad to make the correction.

DEPARTING for once from our custom of rejecting all resolutions because of the multitude of them received, we give this one because of the bitterness of the criticism to which this gentleman has been subjected. In giving this resolution a place, we wish to say that we have received a large number of congratulations to members of the House from their constituents, the very multiplicity of which precludes their publication. We would suggest that these congratulations be sent directly to the Representatives themselves. While we unite with the people in expressions of approval of the work done thus far, we have not space to spare for all the good words that come to us concerning our Representatives in the present House.

Whereas, The political integrity of our Representative from the Forty-eighth district has been publicly assailed by certain of his comrades of the G. A. R.,

Resolved, by Alliance No. 2315, of which the Hon. Mr. Patterson is a member, That we fully approve of his course in the House, and that he has fully met the wishes and interests of his constituents; and is entitled to our confidence and cordial support; and further that Major M. Patterson is a member in good standing in Robt. Hsie Post of the G. A. R.

J. W. WAKAMAKER, President,
CHAS. DIENHAGEN, Secretary.

LOOK

On your paper, and if "Feb." is on it your subscription expires this month. Send us a dollar at once, as you cannot afford to miss a number. The name of every subscriber is dropped promptly on the expiration of the time for which he has paid.

SHALL THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BE BLOTED OUT OF EXISTENCE?

In 1876 the State Historical society of Kansas was established and fully organized for the express purpose of gathering and preserving the scattered materials of more than two decades of the peculiarly eventful history which had then transpired in the territory and state of Kansas.

It particularly undertook as a voluntary association the work of getting up collections of valuable history so that nothing be lost, for the reason that neither the Kansas state library nor any other institution of the state had undertaken to do this work.

The historical society brought its collections into the state house and placed them in receptacles furnished by the state officers of Kansas who appreciated the inherent value of this initial movement.

The state assumed the expenses of this work, which payments have from the beginning been comparatively small, and thus the society obtained permanent quarters in the state house, making the library and the varied historical collections as the permanent property of this great commonwealth.

The primary object of gathering, preserving, arranging and cataloging the materials of the history of Kansas has been so expanded that the library has grown into a general historical, political and scientific library, the works having come into the society chiefly by donation.

"The play of Hamlet with Hamlet omitted," would be much the same as writing the history of the United States for nearly the last forty years with the history of Kansas left out of it.

Indeed from the day that President Pierce affixed his signature to the Kansas-Nebraska bill on that last spring day of 1854, there has never been a continued period of six month's time, in which Kansas has not furnished comparatively much more than its quota to the general history of the nation.

The collections in the Kansas State Historical society most assuredly have a priceless value and on a line of continuing work the prospective significance of this great boon is beyond human estimation. No exaggeration of its magnitude is hardly possible.

The proceedings of societies in the interest of securing *bona fide* settlers for Kansas, of political and religious organizations, the manuscripts of early missionaries among the Indians of Kansas, of explorers, fur traders, Indian agents and commissioners, all original materials of incalculable value, came into the collection of the state historical society.

For, when the fact was known that Kansas had a living, working, zealous

historical society, which was gathering and preserving the elements of its most wonderful history, people throughout the country who had these materials, as a kindly labor of love and patriotism, placed them in the keeping of the society, where they would ever do good, and where they would remain accessible for the instruction of the studios for all time.

It stands as an incontestible fact that in every state where state historical societies exist, maintained in whole or in part by the state, such societies are given the complete control, so to speak, of making up a historical, miscellaneous, political and scientific library for the use of the people.

As a matter of history of something that, figuratively speaking, "was done in the corner," it is fitting to refer to an occurrence of legislative history so irregular and obscure as to invoke careful attention at the hands of dispassionate law-makers, who have a jealous regard for the public weal of this great and growing commonwealth.

So let it be said that in the session of the Kansas Senate of 1889, after all legislation had ceased as such, and some of the Senators had departed for their homes, to wit, in the afternoon of March 2, 1889, Hon. Charles H. Kimball, who occupied a seat in the Senate from Labette county, offered Senate resolution No. 91.

That the plain, sturdy people of Kansas may have some knowledge of the inception of this work, the following is a copy of the matter found on page 981 of the Senate journal of 1889. Senator Kimball offered Senate resolution No. 91, as follows:

Whereas, The statutory provisions relating to powers and duties of the various state departments, boards and commissions are in many instances vague and indefinite, and without the precision and directness requisite to the intelligent, systematic and methodical conduct of state affairs and the guidance of state officers and others entrusted with the management of institutions and the expenditure of public funds; therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate, That a committee of five members of the Senate be appointed, whose duty it shall be to revise and codify all existing laws, or if in their judgment the public interests so demand, prepare for submission at the next regular session of the Legislature, bills specifically defining the powers and duties of state officers, heads of departments, boards and commissions created by law, and laws providing for the state printing. Said committee shall make its report in writing to the Governor on or before the 1st day of December, 1890, and the Governor is hereby requested to have the report printed, and to transmit a copy thereof to each member elect of the next House and Senate before the convening of the Legislature of 1891. The members of the committee shall receive as compensation for their services the same per diem and mileage in attending meetings as is allowed to state Senators. The committee is authorized to employ a secretary, who shall receive the same amount per diem as is allowed the secretary of the Senate.

The record following reads thus:

Senator Kimball moved the adoption of the resolution.

A vote being had the motion prevailed. The president appointed as such committee Senators Harkness, Kelley of Crawford, Murdock, Kimball and Moody.

The report of this self-styled revision committee occupies thirteen pages of a pamphlet, and after reciting the gist of Senate resolution No. 91, the following appears:

The committee met on the sixth day of January A. D., 1890, and at once began a careful examination and discussion of the existing laws to be revised, and in that connection made patient and careful inquiry as to what were considered

the defects therein and the changes desired. That the committee might be fully informed of all causes of complaint, state officers, as well as ex-state officers, members of the various boards and commissions of the state and others who have had practical experience in the workings of the laws now in force were invited to give the committee the benefit of their experience and criticisms. From the suggestions and criticisms so made, from our own experience and observation as citizens, and from our official deliberations, the committee have made various amendments and additions to the present laws upon the subjects under consideration, and framed sub-bills coming within the scope of such resolutions as were deemed advisable, as will more fully appear from the bills herewith submitted.

Sub-headings found in the report appear to the number of eighteen, the fifth one of which is given as the "State Library and Historical Society." And under this heading are the following huge chunks of knowledge and wisdom:

But little need be said about those adjuncts to the state government. The committee is of the opinion that the books of the library, and the books, charts, manuscripts, pictures, etc., of the historical society ought to be brought together to form one state library. First, this is largely in the interest of economy, and this alone ought to settle the question, but to have a good library, one which will be easy of access, and properly managed they ought to be brought together and be put under one head. In this way the books which are now duplicated, each library having the same books, the duplicates could be sold, thus creating a source of revenue. Now they are superfluous. Then again a great library is built up only by the process of bringing together, not scattering. And again, the fact of two libraries creates jealousies and unwholesome rivalries, and extravagance in the appropriation of moneys. The committee has therefore prepared a bill for the consolidation of the two libraries into the state library, and for its regulation and maintenance, which is herewith submitted.

The people of Kansas in no portion of its broad domain have ever thought it was a matter of propriety to abolish the state historical society, and the six gentlemen below named can not claim at this time to be representing the general thought of their constituents as expressed at the polls at the last election held in the state.

Lieutenant Governor Andrew J. Felt, who appointed this "revision committee" of five Senators in a semi-clandestine manner was in a minority at the last election, November 4, 1890, of 35,409. The Republican candidate for Governor at said election in the district represented by Senator Harkness was in a minority of 2,423; in the district represented by Senator Kelley, in a minority of 1,715; in Senator Murdock's district, 1,360; in Senator Kimball's district, 1,204; and in Senator Moody's district he was in a minority of 423. And in regard to Senator Kimball's equity to a seat, what intelligent person on this matter supposes he had a majority of the votes as they came out of the ballot boxes?

But to return to these Senatorial revisers. It is most respectfully submitted that when this penny wise and pound foolish committee of five framed their bill to eliminate the state historical society of Kansas from the list of its sacred institutions, honored and revered by its public spirited citizens of the highest type, living and translated, they really gave to it the title, "An act to provide for the regulation and maintenance of the state library."

Would not a rose of any other name smell as sweet?

But it was ever thus; when a pretended reform was predicated on an